Review of customs duty structure

†3129. SHRIMATI SAVITA SHARDA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any task force has been constituted by Government for the review of the customs duty structure;

(b) if so, the details of progress made in this regard; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of answer to (a) above.

Interest rate of PPF

3130. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the interest rate on Public Provident Fund scheme have been cut to 9.5 per cent in March, 2001 from a level of 11 per cent earlier;

(b) whether the Union leaders are thinking to go on strike if the old rate is not restored; and

(c) if so, what are Government's views on this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) The interest rate on Public Provident Fund was reduced from 11 per cent to 9.5 per cent as the real interest was considered to be high.

(b) and (c) Public Provident Fund is a voluntary scheme open to the general public. It is not known if union leaders are contemplating a strike on this issue.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.